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Philip W. Pitts Letter to George W. Simons Jr Regarding Orlando Housing Code

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c/o City Planning Office
City Hall, Orlando; Florida
July 26, 1957

HOUSING CODE
PUBLIC SWIMMING POOL
CONVENTION INFO
ASSESSED VAL.
LIBRARY

DMr. George W. Simons, Jr.
401 First Federal Savings Building
Jacksonville 2, Florida

Dear Mr. Simons;

I received an inquiry today from Mr. Halbe of the newspaper regarding a minimum housing code for Orlando.

Mr. Halbe wanted to know if that would be included in your recommendations for the September 15 preliminary report. He stated that he understood from Ralph Jones this was included in your contract. Also he wants to know the type of standards to be included. I answered him that I would correspond with you and let him know.

Afterwards I checked with Mr. Albert; the item on a housing code was included in the contract as stated. I also talked with Ralph Jones and he said that the type of things he was interested in having included were such items as a toilet, a sink with running water, screening, hot water perhaps, and minimum size of sleeping rooms. Mr. Albert stated about the same thing; he figures the work should be included for Orlando if effective enforcement can be provided. Ralph Jones stated he would not be able to give effective enforcement with his present staff; at least one additional person would be required for that purpose.

Ralph asked for a copy of the housing code prepared for Columbus, Ga. He understood Hubert Caraway worked with you on a minimum housing code for Columbus.

Ralph gave me an interesting idea for a swimming facility. He states there is a great demand for public swimming facilities, particularly on lakes. However, pollution is difficult to control due to storm sewage drainage. His idea is to build containment walls out into several public lakes to provide large areas for swimming that could be protected from pollution. Water in that area could be circulated, filtered, and chlorinated if necessary to keep the facility safe. The one public swimming facility now provided by the City on lake Lorna Doone is very close to the pollution level. This is a small lake, but only one end of it is used; water is only circulated, not filtered or chlorinated. Storm sewage drains into this lake. Ralph believes that this facility could be made safe by his plan - though he knows of no place where the idea has been tried - and together with the other recreation areas located here the Lorna Doone site could be developed into a community facility. Ralph thought the development of the Lake Fairview site (as suggested by Tommy Starling) would be a very good idea.

By the way, Tommy Starling is no longer working for the City. He took a job with Gary's Duck Inn - manager, I think. However, the City Council authorized Mr. Starling to continue to consult with us on plans for recreation facilities. Would it not be a good idea for us to meet with

him on your next trip down; I shall have completed the neighborhood studies by that time.

I shall gather data on assessed valuation of the area surrounding the CBD. However, I talked with Mr. Albert and he states that assessed valuation figures may be very misleading. So I am also going to talk with a representative of the Board of Realtors, and also with Mr. Rex, a realtor on the Planning Board. Mr. Rex, as you may recall, was very enthusiastic about your mention of redevelopment of these areas. Would current assessed valuation figures (1957) be sufficient or should I go back to 1945 or 1950 for comparative data? The information in the Tax Assessor's Office is filed from 1953 to the present on the current cards. Before 1953 I would have to go to their old files. ~~xxxxxxx~~ This would mean twice as much work since the data would have to come from two separate files. Would the data for 1953 and 1957 suffice?

I have arranged a meeting with Mr. Joel Moore, head of the Orlando Convention Bureau, to discuss plans for a new City auditorium or convention hall. I already gave him a list of information we would find useful in evaluating the need for convention facilities:

- List of conventions brought into Orlando during past several years.
- Number of people attending conventions in Orlando each year; estimate of money spent.
- List of large conventions we could get but do not get because of inadequate facilities.

Would you please advise me of any other requirements in this respect?

Mr. Moore suggested we meet next week with Mr. Clarence Gay, of Hotel Men's Association to get their ideas. Would you please advise me of any information to get from him? Particularly ideas as to sites? The hotel men want the site convenient to Downtown; the other location mentioned - Loch Haven Park - would not be too acceptable to the hotels because it would provide trade for motels more so than for themselves.

On the library matter. I am preparing a spot map of library users to show distribution of users during the week of the survey for the main library, the branch libraries, and the bookmobile.

Sincerely yours,

Philip W. Pitts